

IN THE SPECIFICATION

**Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 5, line 17, with the following paragraph:**

--A nonvolatile semiconductor memory device comprises: a semiconductor substrate having a peripheral circuit region and a memory cell region; a first element region provided in the memory cell region; a second element region provided in the peripheral circuit region; a memory cell having source and drain diffusion layers each provided in the first element region; a peripheral transistor having source and drain diffusion layers each provided in the second element region; an element isolation region being in contact with the first element region; an insulating film covering the memory cell, the peripheral transistor and the element isolation region and containing an insulator different from the element isolation region, the insulating film being harder for an oxidizing agent to pass therethrough, compared with a silicon oxide film, and a surface of the insulating film being oxidized; an inter-level insulating film provided on the surface of the insulating film, the inter-level insulating film containing an insulator different from the insulating film; a contact hole provided in the inter-level insulating film and the insulating film, the contact hole reaching at least one of the source and drain diffusion layers of the memory cell and overlapping the element isolation region; and a contact plug provided in the contact hole, the contact plug being in contact with at least one of the source and drain diffusion layers of the memory cell, the insulating film and the inter-level insulating film.

**Please replace the Abstract at page 38 with the following paragraph:**

A nonvolatile semiconductor memory device includes comprises: an element isolation region being in contact with a first element region, an insulating film covering a memory cell, a peripheral transistor and the element isolation region, an inter-level insulating film provided

on the surface of the insulating film, and a contact hole provided in the inter-level insulating film and the insulating film. The inter-level insulating film contains an insulator different from the insulating film. The contact hole reaches at least one of source and drain diffusion layers of the memory cell and overlaps the element isolation region. The insulating film contains an insulator different from the element isolation region and the insulating film is harder for an oxidizing agent to pass therethrough than a silicon oxide film. A surface of the insulating film is oxidized.